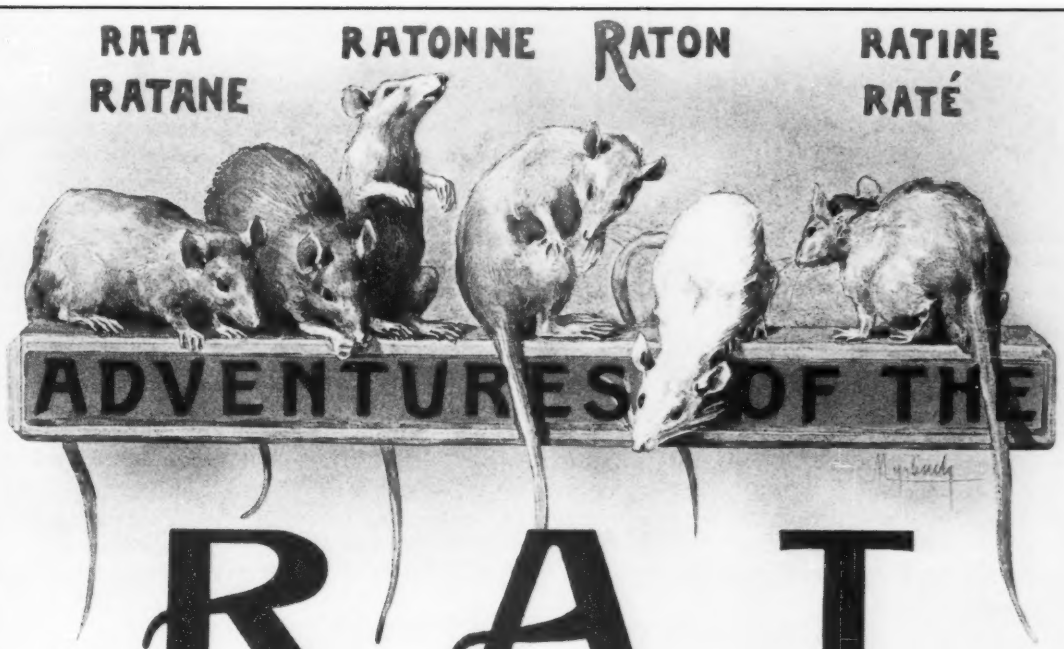
Library of Congress

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Vol. 53, No. 1 Published Biweekly January 10, 1994



RAT FAMILY

A Fairy Tale by

JULES VERNE

Bringing a Verne Tale to the English-Speaking World

Library of Congress

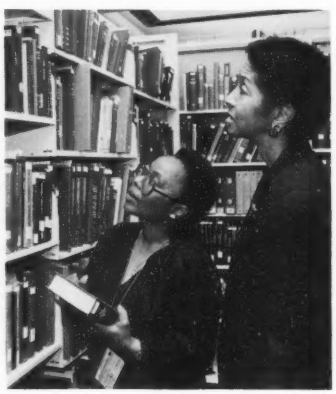
INFORMATION BULLETIN

Vol. 53, No. 1
January 10, 1994

JAMES H. BILLINGTON
Librarian of Congress

4

6



14

On the Cover: Cover illustration from *Adventures of the Rat Family,* by Jules Verne.

Cover Story: Jules Verne is well known as the father of science fiction, but he also wrote in other genres: adventure, mystery and comedy. He even wrote a fairy tale, *Adventures of the Rat Family,* which, thanks to an LC expert, is now available for the first time in an English translation. 6

Top Researcher Retires: Joseph Ross, chief of the Congressional Research Service since 1986, left the Library last month. 3

Safety First: In order to ensure the safety of its collections and improve reference service, the Prints and Photographs Division announces a new policy for use of its reading room. 3

The Lion Roars: "Leo Belgicus: The Dutch & Flemish World, 1500–1800," an exhibition of early maps, opened at the Library. 4

Damage Control: The Library cosponsored the first international meeting on preventive conservation in the Americas. 11

News from the Center for the Book 12

Out of Africa: A South African librarian came to LC for an internship in the African Section. 14

The *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* is issued biweekly except in August (no issues published) and in December (one issue published) by the Public Affairs Office of the Library of Congress and distributed free of charge to publicly supported libraries and research institutions, academic libraries, learned societies and allied organizations in the United States.

Comparable institutions and organizations in other countries may arrange to receive the *Bulletin* on an exchange basis by applying in writing to the Library's Exchange and Gift Division. All other correspondence should be addressed to the LC *Information Bulletin,* Public Affairs Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540–8610.

GUY LAMOLINARA, Editor
MALINDA B. NEALE, PEGGY F. PIXLEY,
Printing and Processing Section
JOHN J. KOZAR, Publisher

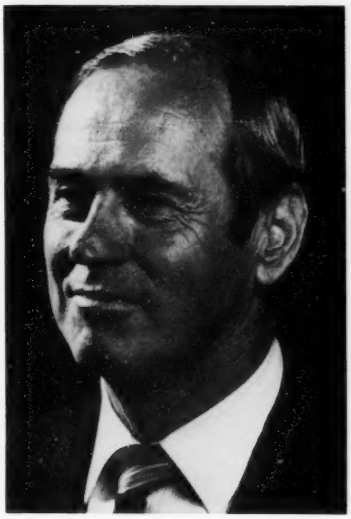
Congressional Research Service Director Retires:
Joseph Ross Leaves Library After 20 Years

Joseph E. Ross, director of the Congressional Research Service (CRS) since 1986, retired Dec. 3.

Mr. Ross, who has been on the staff of the Library since 1972, was responsible for directing the work of more than 800 staffers who answer the more than half-million congressional requests that come into CRS annually.

"Joe Ross was one of the Library's greatest assets. For the past eight years, he has ably led his staff in the successful fulfillment of the Library's chief mission: that of serving Congress," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. "His leadership has helped make CRS vital to the operations of the legislative branch of the U.S. government."

Joseph Ross joined the staff of CRS in May 1972 as a senior specialist in American public law, and in January 1973 was appointed chief of the American Law Division. He was appointed chief of CRS by former Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin in 1986.



Joseph Ross

An attorney, Mr. Ross has worked at the U.S. Justice Department (1969–71), and while in the Navy for the Office of the Judge Advocate General (1951–1969). His last position in the military was as deputy assistant judge advocate general (Military Justice) in Washington, D.C. He retired from the Navy as a captain in 1969. From 1948 to 1951, he was in private practice in New York City.

Mr. Ross graduated cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree in 1943 from St. John's University and received an LL.B. from the same institution in 1948.

"Leaving the Library and CRS after 20 years was not an easy decision to make, but I know that the capable staff of CRS will continue to do the fine work they have always done after my departure," said Mr. Ross.

The father of eight children, Mr. Ross is married to the former Joan M. Needham.

His successor will be appointed by the Librarian of Congress in consultation with the Joint Committee on the Library.

Safeguarding the Prints and Photographs Collections:
Reading Room Will Launch Pilot Project

In order to increase the security of its unique collections, to ensure safe handling of fragile items and to improve reference service, the Prints and Photographs Division will launch in the near future a pilot project to limit the number of patrons in its reading room. The pilot will begin one month after the Architect of the Capitol has completed modifications to the Reading Room.

Use of the reading room will be limited, *at any one time,* to eight walk-in patrons and three patrons with appointments. The limit does not apply to congressional staff and Library of Congress staff.

Other special collections reading rooms at LC have taken similar steps to ensure the safe handling of materials, an integral part of ensuring the physical security of unique Library collections. The Manuscript Division limits the number of items served to a patron at any one time; the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division requires researchers to make appointments to see films and video materials, and listeners are served by playback technicians to ensure safe handling of fragile recordings.

The past decade has witnessed significant growth in the demand to use visual primary source materials at the Library of Congress; in the last four years alone there has been a steady increase in use of the collections (35 percent) and a dramatic increase in the number of items that are available to researchers (78 percent). At present, the Prints and Photographs Reading Room sometimes attracts as many as 30 patrons at one time. This demand seriously impairs the small reference staff's ability to provide proper observation of the reading room, instructions for

the safe handling of the collections, and high-quality reference service.

Recent evidence of theft and of the mishandling of fragile and brittle original images has underscored the necessity of increasing security in the reading room and of providing patrons with complete instructions on the handling of materials that are served. Service to researchers is complicated by the wide variety of formats that are available, the many different cataloging/finding systems in use, the range of reproduction services offered and increasingly complicated donor and copyright restrictions.

As is currently the practice, two reference librarians will be on duty to help patrons without appointments. Another reference librarian will offer individual assistance to patrons with appointments.

Appointments are strongly recommended for first-time users, for patrons undertaking complicated research and for patrons who require the help of a specific reference specialist or curator. Appointments are required when patrons expect to view more than 15 original items from the division's collections of posters, drawings, master photographs and fine prints (this does not include documentary photographs, the bulk of the division's holdings). Appointments must be made for classes or other study groups, and special arrangements must be made when the number of images required by a project will far exceed average use.

Comments will be invited from the public after the pilot has been in place for three months. The new policy will be evaluated to determine the extent to which it addresses current concerns and its impact on researchers. To schedule an appointment or to discuss an immediate concern or question regarding the pilot project, call or write Mary Ison, Head, Reference Section, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540-4280; telephone (202) 707-8867.

'Leo Belgicus' Exhibition Opens at the Library

On Nov. 16 the Library launched an exhibition appropriate for the day.

Opening on Dutch-American Heritage Day, "Leo Belgicus: The Dutch & Flemish World, 1500-1800" is an exhibition of approximately 70 early maps and other items primarily from the Library's Geography and Map Division. The exhibition, which was curated by Andrew Cosentino of the Interpretive Programs Office, recognizes the important contributions the Dutch and Flemish have made to world culture, as mapmakers and early explorers of the globe.

The exhibition was made possible with the support of the Embassy of the Netherlands, the Netherland-America Foundation, Netherlands-American Amity Trust, Julian Redelé, Harold Henriquez, minister plenipotentiary of the Netherlands Antilles, and the Flemish Community.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington opened the reception, held in the Geography and Map Division, by noting that the exhibition "illustrates the pivotal role of the Dutch and Flemish in the cartographic renaissance of the 16th and 17th centuries."

The Library's Dutch-language collections comprise nearly 200,000 items, making them the largest such collection in the Western Hemisphere. "Through the conscientious efforts of our German/Dutch area specialist, Margrit B. Krewson, they are increasing annually by some 3,000 titles," he said.

Dr. Billington next introduced Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged, the Netherlands ambassador to the United States. Mr. Jacobovits called "Leo Belgicus" the fruition of "a wonderful idea to dedicate an exhibition to two countries which through the centuries

Dr. Billington (left) and Ralph Ehrenberg (center) welcome Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits of the Netherlands to the exhibition reception. *Photos by Helen Dalrymple*

have been so closely linked.

"The exhibition shows Leo Belgicus roaring like never before," he joked.

Next to speak was Juan Cassiers, Belgian ambassador to the United States, who said, "All of us who care about the preservation of Western culture are grateful we have an institution like the Library of Congress, and that it displays its collections for our enjoyment."

Margrit Krewson (left) and Ambassador Juan Cassiers of Belgium and his wife, Marguerite, take a look at the exhibition catalog.

The speeches were brought to a close by Ralph Ehrenberg, chief of the Geography and Map Division. He related how LC came to acquire such a rich collection of early Dutch and Flemish maps: Philip Lee Phillips, the first chief of the Map Division, began to collect 16th century Dutch and Flemish maps and atlases during three visits to Europe beginning in 1906, "which he made, as he noted in his annual reports, 'at no expense to government.' Since that time, the division has continued to collect actively in this area.

"Today," Mr. Ehrenberg continued, "the products of the Renaissance map-making trade that was centered in Antwerp and Amsterdam form the core of the Geography and Map Division's collection of 4.5 million maps and atlases and provided the materials for the exhibition that we open this evening."

["These maps are some of the 'jewels' of the Geography and Map Division's collections," said Ronald Grim, head of the Reference and Bibliography Section, during an interview after the opening. "These were some of the first examples of maps being printed. Before 1482, maps existed in manuscript form and thus were not available to a very wide audience. With the advent of the printing press, they became more widely available, although only to the wealthiest people. By the 1560s the Dutch and Flemish became very prolific mapmakers, and these maps were also works of art."

[Philip Lee Phillips traveled to Europe and purchased many of the atlases. "Now they have become collectors' items," that would be too expensive for the Library to acquire today, said Dr. Grim. "Outside of Europe, we probably have the best collection of cartographic material from this time period."

["I think it is interesting that this exhibition followed the one we had on Landsat images," he added. In that exhibition, "we were dealing with one of the newest technologies in cartography. Here we are going back to another revolution, the beginnings of the printed atlas. These collections encompass the range of the division's collections."]

Then the guests, many of whom were from Washington's Dutch and Flemish communities, were free to enjoy the beautifully drawn and colored maps and atlases on display that their ancestors had made centuries ago. —*Guy Lamolinara*

Information Bulletin '92 Index Available

Quick: When did the Gorbachevs visit the Library? Who was the keynote speaker at the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration? How did the *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* celebrate its 50th anniversary? You can find answers to all these questions and many, many more when you purchase indexes to the *Information Bulletin*.

The 1992 *Index* is just off the press and back issues are still available at the following prices:

☐ 1992 Index—$10 each

☐ 1991 and 1992 Indexes—$15

☐ Individual indexes, 1985–1991—$3.50 each

☐ SPECIAL OFFER: All eight indexes (1985–1992)—$25

If you are interested in tracking major events in the world of libraries and information science, or if you just want access to the chronicle of LC events, order now.

Specify the index editions desired and send with your check or money order made out to the Library of Congress Professional Association to: Index Orders, Library of Congress Professional Association, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540-9991.

Foreign libraries add $4 for shipping and handling. Orders for libraries in the United States and Canada routinely are sent book rate; first class is available for an additional $2.

'Adventures of the Rat Family':

A Verne Expert Brings Fairy Tale to English-Speaking Public

Once upon a time there was a family of rats: The father, Raton; the mother, Ratonne; their daughter, Ratine; and her cousin, Raté. Their servants were the cook, Rata, and the maid, Ratane.

Now, my dear children, these worthy, esteemed rodents had such extraordinary adventures that I cannot resist the desire to narrate them to you.

These adventures took place in the age of fairies and magicians, and also during the time that animals talked. Still, they didn't talk any more nonsense than did people of that epoch, nor any more than do people of today, for that matter. Listen, then, my dear children. I begin!

—Opening paragraphs of *Adventures of the Rat Family: A Fairy Tale*, by Jules Verne

Following is a first-person account by an LC specialist of his efforts to bring this tale, previously available only in French, to the English-speaking world. The story was recently translated and published in English by Oxford Press, with a foreword by the author of this article and an introduction by Iona Opie, a noted authority in the field of children's lore and literature.

by Brian Taves

Jules Verne is remembered for such classic novels of adventure and science fiction as *Around the World in 80 Days, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, Journey to the Center of the Earth* and *From the Earth to the Moon.*

But he also wrote adventures, mysteries and comedies. He even wrote a fairy tale. *Adventures of the Rat Family* is one of Verne's most unusual stories, in which he diverged from his usual formula to write his only fairy tale and one of his few pure fantasies. First published in France over a century ago, it has just been published in an elegant children's edition by Oxford University Press (72 pp., $14.95).

Verne's international popularity began with the publication of his first book in 1863, and today he still remains one of the best-selling and most widely translated authors of all time. Verne (1828–1905) has become known as the prophet of the 20th century through his uncanny ability to foresee scientific developments as well as their social impact. At the same time, his books have a literary quality that attracts each generation of readers anew. Scholars recognize Verne as a compelling and complex writer, and his work has been studied from political, psychological, structuralist and mythic perspectives.

Now, the resources of the Library of Congress, together with the efforts of this writer, have enabled a Verne story to be published for the first time in English. A Verne enthusiast for more than 25 years, I arranged for the translation (by Evelyn Copeland) and publication of *Adventures of the Rat Family*, and wrote an afterword for the volume. Included are all 17 original color illustrations by Felician Myrbach-Rheinfeld, reproduced from the January 1891 holiday issue of the fashionable Parisian journal *Le Figaro illustre.*

Because the Library's collections include this magazine, both the illustrations and translation could be taken from this first appearance of the story. *Adventures of the Rat Family* was not published in book form until after Verne's death, with the appearance of the 1910 anthology *Yesterday and Tomorrow,* containing

The prince and the evil genie had the rat family trapped inside a sphinx. The good fairy transformed some of them into ferocious animals that chased their captors away. *All illustrations by Felician Myrbach-Rheinfeld from* Adventures of the Rat Family

Ratopolis, whose "boulevards, squares and streets are lined with magnificent cheeses in the form of houses: Gruyères, Edams, Goudas, twenty types of cheddar."

only a few of the engravings and a text revised by Verne's son, Michel, his literary executor. The Oxford edition is the first time that *Adventures* has been published in book form in any language with all of the original illustrations.

As *Adventures of the Rat Family* attests, Verne's writing is far more diverse than his reputation as the father of science fiction suggests. He wrote more than 60 novels, as well as numerous short stories, plays, articles and poems, covering a range of genres and literary forms. He was actually most prolific in the genres of adventure, mystery and comedy. Yet this has been obscured by the surprising fact that, for such a famous and esteemed author, much of his work has never been translated from his native French into English. One of the reasons is that Verne's writing was often politically charged, and as a result it was often changed or censored by contemporary Anglo-American publishers.

For instance, in *The Mysterious Island (1875)*, Verne explains the true identity of the enigmatic Captain Nemo, hero of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Nemo had been an Indian prince who fought British colonial rule of his homeland, before fleeing to an exile in his submarine, the *Nautilus*. In deference to contemporary English-language readers, when *The Mysterious Island* was translated, Nemo's sentiments were changed to portray him as an admirer of the British, instead of their enemy. (This bogus translation, with its reversal of Verne's intention intact, continues to be reprinted to this day.)

By the late 1890s, the overtly anti-imperial tenor so suffused Verne's plots that British publishers stopped sponsoring translations—although his new books continued to appear annually in France until 1910, five years after his death.

A different but equally contentious issue was probably what precluded a translation of *Adventures of the Rat Family*. Not only does the story avoid Verne's usual formulas, it deals with evolution, a problematic and controversial idea when the story first appeared in 1891, and one that was surely prohibitive for American publishers. This was especially true since *Adventures of the Rat Family* was also one of Verne's few stories accessible to a very young audience. However, like many fairy tales, its larger significance requires more sophisticated adult reading.

In *Adventures*, Verne portrays a magical movement up and down the evolutionary ladder, as a close-knit family of rats is transformed into various lower forms of life, from mollusks to birds. The instigator of these deeds is a genie, hired by a cruel prince who desires the family's daughter, although she loves another.

Verne both recognizes and mocks the idea of evolution by having his characters change from one species

to another, finally making a metamorphosis into men and women. Added amusement is provided by one cousin who never quite catches up as he makes each transformation, always retaining a feature of his previous incarnation, until finally he has a donkey's tail even after becoming a man.

Jules Verne had long been interested in evolution and basically accepted the theory. His 1858 play, *M. de Chimpanze* (untranslated), is of a chimp that readily adapts to high society, and a giant prehistoric man is sighted in *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Verne portrays a "missing link" species in his 1901 novel, *The Aerial Village*, and speculates that the tribe will be incorporated into an imperial colony. "The Humbug" is the story of a P.T. Barnum-like character whose successful hoax convinces New Yorkers that he has unearthed the bones of early man near Albany.

By cloaking his use of the evolutionary theme within the fantasy of *Adventures of the Rat Family*, Verne hoped to circumvent disapproval of his more serious and controversial subtext. He had first related the story during a European lecture tour in 1887, and he was so delighted with the idea that he enlarged it into a novella. He cleverly imbued it with his satirical expertise, lending it a light touch that concealed much of its bite. Verne was skilled in comedy, especially when it involved bizarre characters in unusual locales, as demonstrated by his treatment of the stuffy British travelers in *Around the World in 80 Days*.

The new version of *Adventures of the Rat Family* is partly a result of my preparation of *The Jules Verne Encyclopedia*, to be published in early 1994 by Scarecrow Press. This book will provide the first complete bibliographic account of all of Verne's many works in English, as well as such other manifestations of his global influence as Verne philatelic items and movie and television adaptations.

The evil genie mistakenly turns the wrong person into an ape.

The Jules Verne Encyclopedia demonstrates that the Library of Congress has one of the most extensive collections of Verne material in the English-speaking world. One chapter by my primary coauthor, Stephen Michaluk Jr., explains that this is largely a result of the bequest of Willis E. Hurd. As president of the first American Jules Verne Society in the 1940s, Hurd acquired a remarkable collection that today provides the basis for the Library's Verne material in both the Rare Book and Special Collections Division and the main stacks.

And there are many other Verne resources at the Library, such as those in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, which has preserved the earliest feature-length adaptation of Verne's Russian adventure, *Michael Strogoff* (1914).

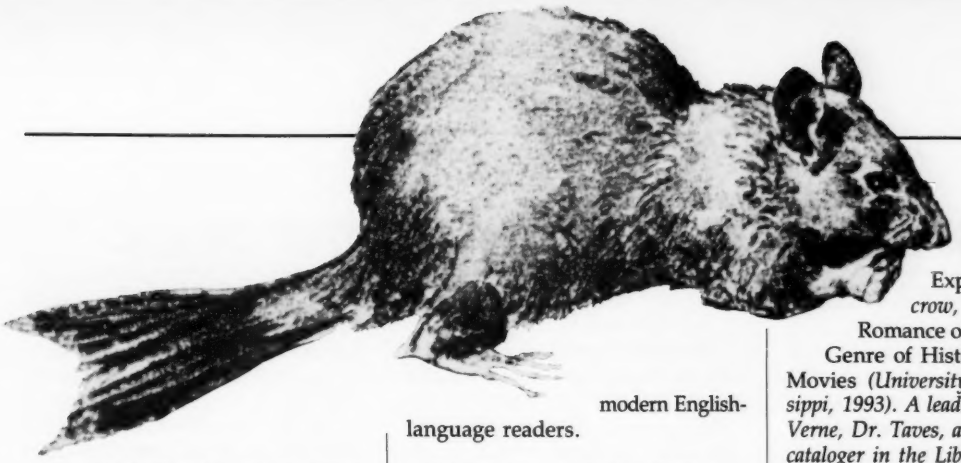
Together, *Adventures of the Rat Family* and *The Jules Verne Encyclopedia* finally allow a more complete recognition of the multifaceted talents of this famous author. However, while

The villain defeated, he is banished by the good fairy, and the prince and his love are united and live happily ever after.

he still has many stories to entertain us, only literary specialists have access to the totality of his work. Most English-language readers are given only a glimpse of the range and complexity of Jules Verne's thinking, and many tales like *Adventures of the Rat Family* have been withheld. The first English translation of this story is but one example of the unusual and intriguing Verne material—historic and often controversial—that remains unavailable in English.

It is hoped that *Adventures of the Rat Family* and *The Jules Verne Encyclopedia* will highlight the abundant untranslated Verne material, and the Library's rich resources can continue to assist in bringing them to

Brian Taves compares the original *Rat Family* with the new English-language version. *Photo by Jim Higgins*



Cousin Raté, whose transformations never work out quite right, is left with a fish's tail.

modern English-language readers.

Brian Taves, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in cinema and critical studies, is also the author of Robert Florey, the French Expressionist *(Scarecrow, 1987) and* The Romance of Adventure: The Genre of Historical Adventure Movies *(University Press of Mississippi, 1993). A leading expert on Jules Verne, Dr. Taves, a film historian and cataloger in the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, made a pilgrimage to Verne's home and tomb in Amiens in 1979.*

LC Supports First International Meeting On Preventive Conservation in the Americas

Last summer, the Library's Preservation Directorate, in conjunction with the Association for the Conservation of the Cultural Patrimony of the Americas (APOYO), the Conservation Analytical Laboratory of the Smithsonian Institution and the Getty Conservation Institute, sponsored the international Seminar on Preventive Conservation in Latin America.

More than 120 conservators and officials from libraries, archives and museums attended the Aug. 19 and 20 seminars, held at the Library and the Smithsonian. Amparo de Torres of LC's Conservation Office coordinated the event.

"The primary goal of the seminar was to encourage a greater exchange of information among conservators working in the area of preventive conservation throughout the Americas, to review the progress that has been made, to compare experiences and to learn what has been achieved thus far," Ms. Torres said.

Through papers and panel discussions, given in Spanish and English, the seminar provided an opportunity for conservators from Latin America to discuss with their colleagues in North America the problems in conservation and how they are working to solve those problems. The topics focused on preventive conservation, which concentrates on the prevention of damage to objects rather than on their repair. For example, Hector Montenegro of Cuba gave details of a "Conservation Project for the Cultural Heritage in Cuba"; Peter Waters of the Library of Congress discussed "Phased Conservation in Libraries"; and Ingrid Beck of the Arquivo Nacional in Brazil told the audience "How to Plan and Maintain Low-Cost Preventive Conservation Projects."

"The preventive conservation approach has become well established as a cost-effective means of assuring the long-term preservation of collections all over the world," said Chief of Staff Suzanne Thorin during welcoming remarks.

Ms. Torres believes the seminar will help to establish cooperative efforts among the nations of the Western Hemisphere.

In the Conservation Office she is the registrar of all objects brought into the office. She is also in charge of the "point system," a management tool "to rationalize and direct the allocation of the conservation work we do for the Interpretive Programs Office, the Law Library and the custodial divisions of the Library."

"It became clear that the individuals and the institutions working toward preventive conservation are faced with very similar problems and are implementing very similar solutions to those challenges throughout the continent," Ms. Torres said.

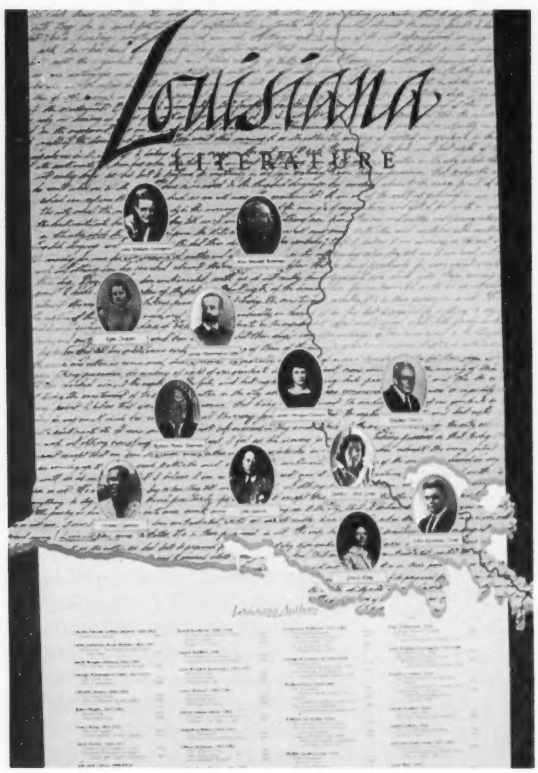
—Georgette Magassy Dorn

News from the Center for the Book:
New State Center Approved for Louisiana

The State Library of Louisiana will be the home of the new Louisiana Center for the Book.

In making the announcement, John Y. Cole, director of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, congratulated Louisiana State Librarian Tom Jaques on his creativity and perseverance in developing the organizational and funding base needed to establish the center. "We first discussed the possibility at the New Orleans conference of the American Library Association in 1988," Dr. Cole said. "The LC center is very pleased to have a new state affiliate that so amply represents the literary traditions of the Deep South," he added.

The purpose of the Louisiana Center for the Book is "to promote books, reading and libraries to Louisiana citizens and to celebrate the state's rich literary heritage." The center's organizing committee includes representatives from bookstores, state agencies, universities and libraries. An expanded advisory board will include authors, publishers, reading and literacy advocates and business and governmental leaders.



Literary maps of Louisiana and Nebraska (opposite), from the traveling exhibition "Language of the Land."

In addition to reinforcing book and literary activities now under way throughout the state, the Louisiana Center for the Book is considering sponsorship of a variety of projects, particularly a "Louisiana Community of the Book" on-line data base, which would identify Louisiana authors, illustrators, publishers and book sellers. The opening event for the Louisiana Center for the Book will be held in April 1994.

The center has made arrangements to host the Library of Congress traveling exhibition "Language of the Land: Journeys into Literary America" in Baton Rouge from Oct. 14 through Dec. 3, 1995. For information, write Thomas F. Jaques, State Librarian, State Library of Louisiana, 760 Third St., Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0131.

☐ **Interview with John Cole in NEH Magazine.** The November/December issue of *Humanities*, a bimonthly review published by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), features a conversation between center Director John Cole and NEH Chairman Sheldon Hackney about literacy, technology and the future of the book.

☐ **Penn State Establishes a Center for the History of the Book.** On Nov. 15 in University Park, Pa., John Cole presented introductory remarks at the inaugural program of the new Penn State Center for the History of the Book, which is affiliated with the LC Center for the Book and is part of a confederation of similar scholarly centers in the United States and abroad. The featured speaker, John L. Sharpe III, academic librarian for research affairs at Duke University, presented an illustrated lecture on "The Book as Cultural Emblem."

The Penn State Center for the History of the Book is an interdisciplinary venture that promotes the study of the production and dissemination of the printed word, or "print culture." It is based in Penn State's Department of English and directed by Distinguished Professor of English James L.W. West III. The College of Liberal Arts and the University Libraries also provide support. The library's Rare Books Room presented a special exhibition in conjunction with the opening lecture and reception.

The Penn State center will offer graduate seminars and undergraduate honors courses, bring lecturers

to campus, mount exhibitions and host conferences. Director West is also general editor of the Penn State Series in the History of the Book, a new series of scholarly books to be published by Penn State Press. For information about the Penn State Center for the History of the Book, write James L.W. West III, Pennsylvania State University, 101 Willard Building, University Park, PA 16802.

☐ **Nebraska Sponsors Literary, Reading and Storytelling Festivals.** The Nebraska Center for the Book's program of events during 1993 included "Writing for Young People," the 13th annual Nebraska Writing and Storytelling Festival, held in Lincoln at Southeast Community College on June 5; the third annual Nebraska Literature Festival, which attracted more than 1,000 people, many of them high school students, to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus on Sept. 17 and 18; and an autumn series of reading circle programs in five towns: Bellevue, Broken Bow, Minden, Chadron and Alliance.

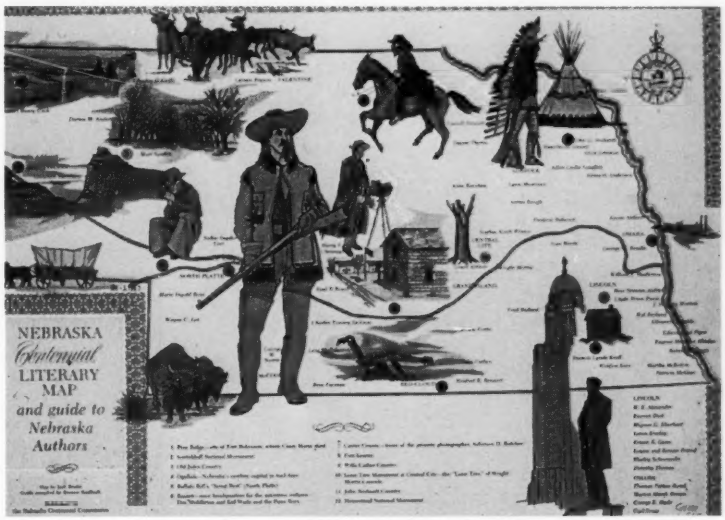
The center's annual meeting, held Nov. 12 at the library of the University of Nebraska-Omaha, featured a special program on censorship. Activities are reported in *NCB Quarterly*, which is sent to all center members. For information, write Nebraska Center for the Book, c/o Lincoln City Libraries, 136 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508.

☐ **State Centers Featured in *Wilson Library Bulletin*.** "The state centers were not part of our original thinking, but now they're the source of most of the action," says center Director John Y. Cole in a feature article about the state centers for the book in the December 1993 issue of the *Wilson Library Bulletin*. Written by Barbara Bryant, a freelance writer for Library of Congress publications and other magazines, the article is based on interviews with many of the state center coordinators.

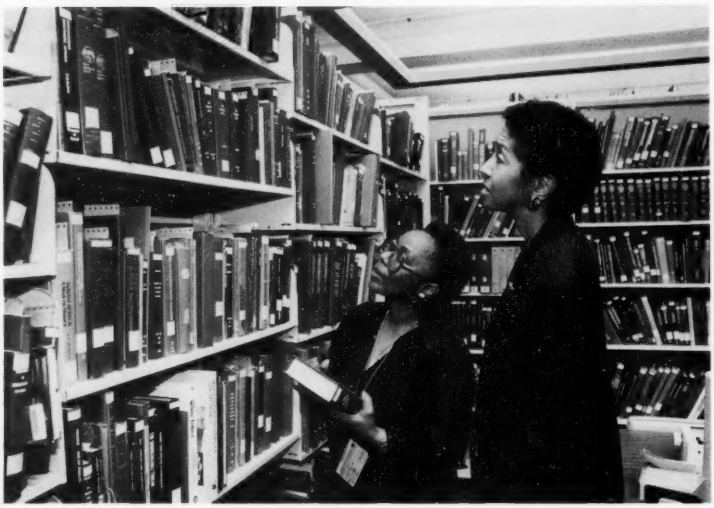
A special feature is a state-by-state "sampling" of promotion projects sponsored by many of the state centers. Projects mentioned include: **Alaska**—a "Buckets for Books" book collection project for child care organizations; **Arizona**—providing personal computers and children's reader advisory software (developed and donated by Oryx Press) to selected public libraries; **California**—"California Reads!!" photography exhibition offered for loan to California libraries; **Colorado**—"The Business Connection," a luncheon program for the business community focusing on how it can fight illiteracy; **Iowa**—a daylong, statewide reading marathon; **Kansas**—developing a statewide literary atlas of Kansas authors; **Michigan**—a children's book fair cosponsored with Wayne State University; **Minnesota**—cosponsors Freedom of Information day public forums; **Montana**—a conference on writing and publishing in the Western genre; **Ohio**—cosponsored "Long-Lived Books for Lifetime Readers," a program about the care and handling of books for private citizens and others with small collections; **Oklahoma**—"Read Around the Rotunda" event at the State Capitol to celebrate National Young Reader's Day; **Oregon**—consponsors "Uncle Sam in Oregon Country," an LC educational exhibition that is seen in libraries and schools throughout the state; **Texas**—cosponsored a conference on contemporary African American literature; **Washington**—the "senior scholars read-in," featuring read-alouds among high school students, senior citizens in nursing homes and young children.

Information about state centers and their promotion projects may be obtained from the Center for the Book, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540.

☐ **Oregon Announces New Project.** The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse, located at the Oregon State Library, has become a project of the Oregon Center for the Book. The clearinghouse disseminates information about challenges to books in schools and public libraries. Its latest annual report appears in the Fall 1993 issue of *Writer's NW*, a quarterly newspaper with a readership of more than 50,000. For information about the Oregon Center for the Book and its projects, write Ellen G. Fader, Oregon State Library, Salem, OR 97310-0640.



Separate but Not Equal:
South African Librarian Does Internship at the Library



Thokozile Nkabinde (left) and Beverly Gray, head of the African Section, look for some reference materials in the reading room. *Photo by Jim Higgins*

Imagine traveling abroad to study library science after living in a country that has few libraries for blacks, a country whose supply of books in rural schools is so limited that teachers resort to telling rather than reading stories to their students. What would it be like for such a student to study in the United States and spend several months doing research in the largest library in the world?

"My internship in the African Section at the Library of Congress has been a very enriching and challenging experience," said Thokozile Nkabinde, a librarian from Natal, South Africa. "I have been particularly impressed with the vast Africana reference collection and the wide range of reference and information services offered by the Library, especially the programs offered to the public. The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Children's Literature Center and the National Demonstration Laboratory were particularly impressive."

During her three months in the African and Middle Eastern Division, Ms. Nkabinde has worked on several research projects, including a survey of the Library's CD-ROM collection, to identify effective search strategies for locating citations on Africa and on women in Africa. She will record her findings in a report and in an article for publication in a library journal.

"The CD-ROM project has been very exciting," she said. "Unlike many on-line data bases which are too expensive for African libraries to acquire, CD-ROM can be adapted to the African information environment. They are inexpensive, space-saving and portable and a valuable alternative to subscribing to and storing huge numbers of journals.

"The African Section's CD-ROM project has enabled me to become comfortable using computer-based reference tools that I was not familiar with before," she added. "This experience has given me the confidence I need to help build appropriate library services in South Africa."

Ms. Nkabinde's three-month visit to the Library was sponsored by the South African Career Development Program, which is funded by AFRICARE, a local nongovernmental organization that supports community development projects in Africa. Prior to coming to the Library, she completed a two-month internship at the Joint World Bank and International Monetary Fund Library. She left the Library of Congress on Nov. 24, and on Dec. 3 flew to Boston to attend an African Studies Association Conference. By December's end, she will be back in her country.

This is not Ms. Nkabinde's first visit to North America. After receiving a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Zululand, she studied Library Technology at Lakehead University in Ontario, Canada. In 1991 she was awarded a scholarship from the Institute of International Education to study library and information science at St. John's University in New York. She received a master's degree in library and information science in May 1993. In Africa, Ms. Nkabinde worked at the Lesotho and Swaziland university libraries. She has also worked with Read, Educate and Develop (READ), a reading and library service promotion project that focuses on black urban and rural communities.

Ms. Nkabinde's exploration of the Library's collection spurred her to begin compiling a bibliography of dissertations and theses on Botswana,

Lesotho and Swaziland. "This project will benefit Africanist scholars in Southern Africa by giving them some perspectives on research trends in the region," she explained.

When asked how she plans to apply her experience gained in the United States upon her return to South Africa, Ms. Nkabinde spoke enthusiastically but pragmatically. "I look forward to returning home in time for South Africa's first historic democratic elections, in April 1994," she said.

"However, I'm also aware that we have many political, social and economic problems to deal with. We lack any kind of basic health care system, and there are widespread housing shortages. Apartheid education and library policies have also ensured that there is an unequal distribution of educational and library resources. We realize that, with the current state of the South African economy, the new government might not have the financial resources to address all these pressing needs immediately. Community-based projects may need government support."

Ms. Nkabinde believes that libraries in South Africa should promote literacy and ensure that access to libraries is protected as a fundamental human right for South Africans.

The answer, she believes, lies in changing the way libraries, and even books, are viewed in her country, a perspective she gained, in part from visits with various local public and school libraries during her stay in the United States. "While studying in New York, I had a chance to examine the role public libraries play in this country," she said. "I was never exposed to one at home. Until I came to this country, I didn't know what community programming was, how libraries should reach out to and meet the informational needs of their communities.

"We should focus on libraries, not as buildings that house books, but as community development tools," she added.

Ms. Nkabinde has spent the past several months contacting church groups and other organizations for donations of new or used children's books for a preschool community reading project she intends to establish upon her return to South Africa. She is seeking funding to store and ship the books after they are received. (To donate books or obtain more information about this project, contact Brian Williams of AFRICARE at (202) 462-3614.)

"I'm looking forward to a teaching career in the field of library and information science at one of the universities in South Africa," said Ms. Nkabinde. She hopes to train and increase the number of black professional librarians in her country. According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) "Report of the Mission to South Africa" for June 1993, out of a population of 3,352 librarians in South Africa, only 9.3 percent of them are black.

"The task of building a democratic society must come from all sectors, teachers, social workers, community organizers and, yes, librarians. I'm eager to return home to participate in the growth to come."

—*Barbara Bryant*

Ms. Bryant is a freelance writer working in the Public Affairs Office.

First Goldman Lecture Delivered

The first Joanna Jackson Goldman lecture was held at the Library Nov. 18. Ronald Steel, professor of international relations at the University of Southern California, lectured on "Victory Without Peace." The series is intended to foster discussion of American customs, international relations and economic and social issues. The series is made possible by a gift from the estate of the late Eric F. Goldman, and was begun in honor of his late wife, Joanna.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20540-8610

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE $300

BULK RATE
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
PERMIT No. G-103

DATED MATERIAL

0163206 005
Univ Microfilms International
ATTN Serials Acquisitions Dept
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor MI 48106

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSN 0041-7904

If you wish to be removed from the mailing list for this publication check here ☐ and return this page to the above address. If change is required enter on address label and return.